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Ministry of Forests and Range
and Minister responsible for Housing

PROVINCE PURCHASES WHISTLER INN FOR $1.2 MILLION

KAMLOOPS – The Province is purchasing the 28-unit Whistler Inn in downtown Kamloops for $1.2 million in order to protect this affordable housing stock for those in need, Minister responsible for Housing Rich Coleman announced today.

"When this opportunity came to our attention, we realized it was a good chance to preserve housing for people on low incomes who may otherwise be at risk of homelessness," said Coleman. "This is another good example of the work we are doing to address the issues surrounding homelessness in Kamloops."

The Province will assume ownership of the small suite rental building on Oct. 1. Located at 506 St. Paul St., it has 15 bachelor units and 13 one-bedroom units. Each unit includes a small kitchenette and a three-piece bathroom. The building also has coin-operated laundry. The Province also plans to do some renovations to improve the building.

"Current residents at the Whistler Inn will not be affected by the ownership change, so they can continue living in the building as long as they want," said Kamloops MLA Claude Richmond. "The Province plans to identify a non-profit housing society to operate and manage the building in the near future, and this will also not affect current tenancies."

The building purchase is being made under the Provincial Homelessness Initiative, an integral part of the provincial housing strategy, Housing Matters BC. The strategy includes a commitment to build new supportive housing units as a continuation of the ongoing work of the Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions. The Province has committed to creating nearly 2,300 new housing units under the Provincial Homelessness Initiative. The Province's budget for shelters and affordable housing is $328 million – nearly triple what it was in 2001.

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